



Sept 27, 2004

Ms. Tracie Billington  
 Division of Planning and Local Assistance  
 Department of Water Resources (DWR)  
 P.O. Box 942836  
 Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Subject: Integrated Regional Water Management Grant Program Guidelines for Proposition 50, Chapter 8, August 2004 Public Draft

Dear Ms. Billington:

I am writing on behalf of the Bay Area Water Agencies Coalition (BAWAC) and other partner agencies in the North Bay in response to the August 16 release of the public draft guidelines for the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Grant Program.

BAWAC consists of the Alameda County Water District, Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency, Contra Costa Water District, East Bay Municipal Utility District, Santa Clara Valley Water District, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and Zone 7 Water Agency. Our partners in the North Bay include Marin Municipal Water District, City of Napa, Solano County Water Agency and Sonoma County Water Agency. Together, our agencies provide safe and reliable water supplies to more than 90 percent of San Francisco Bay Area residents. Some of these agencies also provide wastewater treatment and storm water management services, manage local groundwater basins, serve as stewards of local watersheds and provide flood management services.

Since our April correspondence, I am pleased to update you that our group of individual regional water management agencies around the nine-county Bay Area "super-region" has been joined by other agencies and stakeholder groups including the Association of Bay Area Governments, Coastal Conservancy, Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies in coordinating the compilation of regional plans that address all aspects of water management including water supply, water quality, wastewater, storm water, flood protection, watershed management and habitat restoration. This challenging and ambitious planning effort to coordinate and develop a multi-regional, multi-jurisdictional Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) for the nine-county Bay Area is unprecedented in its vision and scope and far exceeds what the 2002 Integrated Regional Water Management Planning (IRWMP) Act might have envisioned. It is our hope that the state resources agencies would recognize

this extraordinary level of cooperation among the diverse regional entities and support water management programs throughout the Bay Area while this process evolves.

To that end, our immediate interest is in ensuring that the IRWM grant program support and encourage the many types of integrated regional water management planning efforts that have occurred in the Bay Area, from watershed- or county-based efforts to those that we are embarking on for the nine-county Bay Area "super-region". All of these planning efforts have embraced and involved the diverse stakeholders and interested parties in their respective communities. The resultant regional water management plans have therefore incorporated the priorities as defined by the individual regions and thus are currently the most appropriate vehicles to convey the specific needs of the regions for grant program considerations and should be considered as eligible IRWM plans.

All the regions within the Bay Area are challenged by vulnerability to shortages in water supply either because of hydrologic conditions or because of increasing competition for limited supplies. These shortages will be exacerbated by other challenges such as increasingly stringent water quality standards, aging infrastructure and long-term climate change. Therefore, the highest priority need in the Bay Area is support for programs and projects to improve water supply reliability and to continue to meet water quality standards. These overall priorities are reflected in the preliminary work of the Bay Area IRWMP as well as other multi-regional efforts like the CALFED sponsored Bay Area Water Quality and Supply Reliability Program.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into this important process. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or any representative of our partner agencies.

Sincerely,



Stanley M. Williams  
Chief Executive Officer, Santa Clara Valley Water District  
Chair, Bay Area Water Agencies Coalition

cc: Barbara L. Evoy, Chief of Division of Financial Assistance, SWRCB  
John K. Woodling, Division of Planning and Local Assistance, DWR  
Lester Snow, Director, DWR  
Cindy Darling, CBDA